



The Wilderness Station's

OTTER CHATTER NEWSLETTER



JUNE, 2014

(615) 217-3017

THIS MONTHS FEATURED TOPIC:



Fireflies, also known as lightening bugs, are a type of beetle. There are more than 2000 species but not all produce light. However, each species that produces light has its own light pattern. The ones that glow do so mostly to attract mates but also to defend territories and warn predators away. Usually the male will fly around while the female waits in trees, shrubs and grasses. The male flashes his light pattern and an interested female will answer with the same flashing pattern. Firefly light is very efficient with 100% of the energy emitted as light and not heat. Scientists refer to firefly lights as "cold lights". They produce light through an efficient chemical reaction that allows them to glow without wasting heat energy. Species that produce their own light are referred to as bioluminescent.

Bioluminescence begins with the egg and is present throughout the entire life cycle. Firefly eggs have been observed to flash in response to stimulus such as gently tapping or vibrations. The larvae may glow to warn predators away but this is not known for certain.

Firefly larvae are carnivorous predators and their favorite foods are snails and worms. Adult fireflies have almost never been seen feeding on other species of bugs. They might feed on plant pollen and nectar or they may not eat at all. Adult fireflies live only long enough to mate and lay eggs so they may not need to eat during their adult life stage. Imagine thousands of fireflies lighting up at precisely the same time, over and over, from dusk to dark! This occurs in only two places in the world: Southeast Asia and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This amazing light show occurs in late spring each year.

JUNE Programs

Bird Club: Wednesday, June 11th. Overall St. Trailhead. Ages 6+. FREE to the public.

Adult Evening Kayak Float: Friday, June 13th & 20th. 5:30-8:30 p.m. Adults. \$15.00. **Reservations Required.**

What's Up Night Hikes: Tuesday, June 10th. 7:30 p.m. All Ages. \$3.00.

Nature Play Day: Thursday, June 12th. 10:00 a.m. All ages. FREE to the public

WEEKLY PROGRAMS

Rock Hop: Every Monday. 9:30 a.m.—10:15 a.m. Ages 2-4. \$3.00/child. Reservation required on the Tuesday prior to class.

Wild Things: Every Wednesday. 9:30 a.m.- 10:15 a.m. Ages 1-4. \$3.00/child. Reservation required on the Tuesday prior to class.

Tales and Trails: Every Wednesday. 10:30 a.m.—11:15 a.m. Ages 4-7. \$3.00/child. Reservation required on the Tuesday prior to class.

***For more information on these programs, please refer to the Rec Connection or visit www.murfreesborotn.gov/parks**

Book of the Month



An exciting tale about two friends who go on a butterfly adventure!

Get your copy today, on sale now at the station!